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ABSTRACT

Described is the Technical Assistance Development System (TADS), a component of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill which offers support services to preschool demonstration centers for handicapped children in the First Chance Network. Discussed are the four types of services offered: child and parent programing, program planning and evaluation, community program development, and media and information. The delivery system is portrayed in five sequential, interrelated phases: program planning, including specific goals and outcome objectives; needs assessment; technical assistance agreements specifying schedules, responsibilities, and budgetary factors; delivery of services, including in-field assistance (such as consultants and on-site training), in-house assistance, and in-print assistance (including newsletters, manuals, and project information dissemination); and evaluation of the TADS assistance. Reviewed are procedures for making use of TADS services and a statistical summary of service delivery for 1971-72 and 1972-73. TADS responses to nine long range objectives (including development of common program planning format and identification and dissemination of usable program components) are listed. Discussed are such principles of organization and management of support systems as development of an authoritative base, confidentiality, and consultant/client compatibility. A directory of advisors and TADS staff is included. (CL)

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TADS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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A LETTER TO EDUCATORS

The demands on the American educational system are ever-increasing. All across the country, well trained and competent professional educators find themselves in leadership roles where additional resources are needed to implement high quality educational programs but without knowledge as to how or where to obtain such resources. As the public demands "accountability", educators find themselves in a determined search for these additional resources and support.

The Technical Assistance Development System (TADS), a component of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, represents one strategy to provide access to needed resources. TADS' comprehensive support services to demonstration centers for preschool handicapped children, established under the Handicapped Children's Early Education Act, include three-dimensions of support: program planning and evaluation, child and parent programming, and communication systems. The role of TADS is to provide assistance to these educational programs either through its own staff or other consultants in the field who possess expertise in the particular area of need.

Systematic organizational support is not new—agriculture, engineering, business, and industry have invested heavily in developing and sustaining comprehensive support systems. These support systems have proved to be very successful in implementing changes in technology.

We believe that the kind of systematic support provided by technical assistance is a viable response to educational needs for several reasons. First, technical assistance addresses not only the needs of individual educators, but also needs of organizations such as planning and evaluation. Furthermore, assistance occurs in the environment where administrators and teachers work; therefore, the training and support relate to the development of specific competencies where needs exist. Finally, through on-site consultation, workshops, meetings, and internships, a comprehensive support system such as TADS can reduce the "time lag" in delivering to the field authoritative information generated through research and demonstration.

If American education is to become a unified system, support services must be considered as one essential component; and therefore we believe that technical assistance has great potential for facilitating the delivery of educational services to our nation's children.

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Fall, Nineteen Seventy-Four

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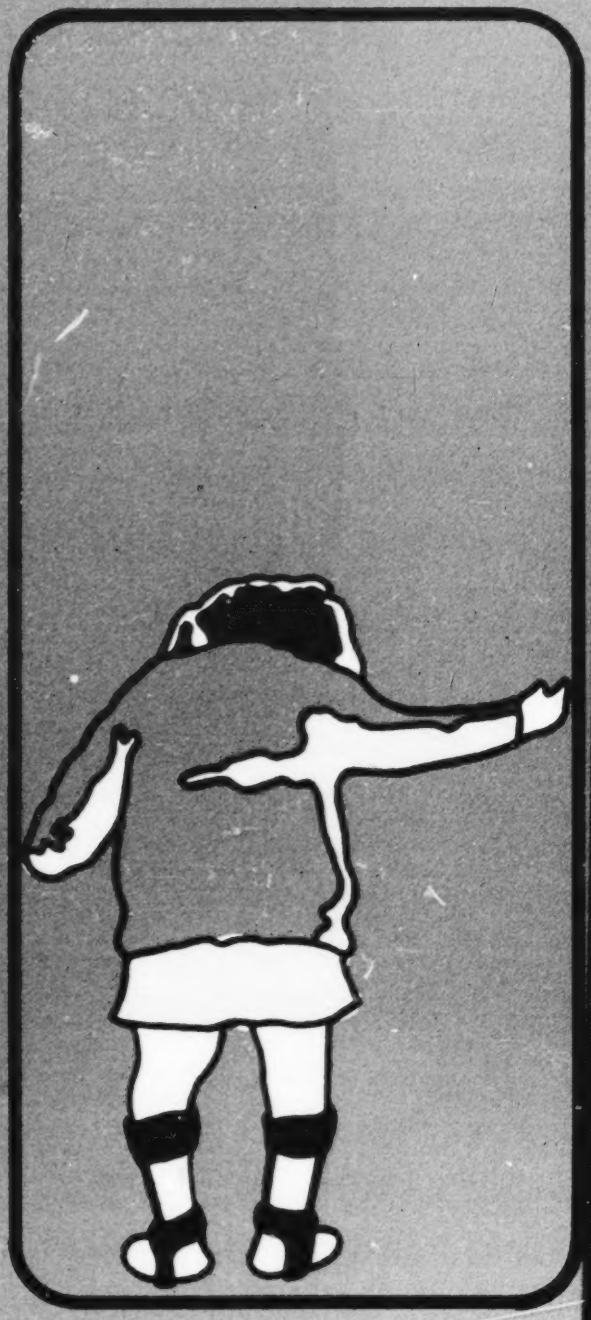
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLIENTS

THE CHILDREN

Approximately 1,000,000 preschool children in the United States today suffer physical, emotional or mental handicaps. These children are saddled with problems that complicate the already complex process of growing up, but they can be helped to overcome or to cope with their handicaps. If handicapped children can be diagnosed at an early age (even before age one) and given the special attention and assistance they need, they can in many cases progress through public school with their peers, and eventually participate in the mainstream of society as contributing individuals.

On the other hand, if children with special needs do not have access to special services, their problems are likely to compound themselves. The handicapped child may lose the capacity to attain a certain level of achievement if he approaches an intermediate step without the help he needs to take it. When this happens, he may fall behind his non-handicapped playmates and could eventually live out his life in an institution in meaningless boredom. The toll in human suffering to the child and those around him is high, to say nothing of the financial cost of institutionalizing an individual and the cost to society of losing a potentially productive member. Thus, services to treat a child's handicap during the early childhood development period cannot be over-emphasized.



THE PROJECTS

In full realization of the importance of early education and the needs of children with handicaps, the U.S. Congress enacted the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP). The goal of this act was to equalize educational opportunity for handicapped children by providing the leadership and resources needed to help the handicapped achieve their fullest potential and to participate constructively in society to their maximum abilities. The long-range objective of the HCEEP Act was to stimulate services to all 1,000,000 preschool-aged handicapped children by 1980.

The method chosen to accomplish these goals was to provide funds for the operation of some projects to serve a proportionately small number of handicapped children to demonstrate high-quality services for young children. These projects have a "missionary" mandate to entice agencies and institutions or groups of interested people to start new projects or to expand their current services to include an educational model for preschool handicapped children. If this "mushroom" or "ripple" effect does take place on a large scale, then it is possible that services will be provided to all preschool handicapped children by the end of the decade.

The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped of the Office of Education accepted the responsibility of administering the projects. Collectively these demonstration projects are known as the First Chance Network; the first group of First Chance projects was funded in 1968. The grants are distributed over a wide geographical basis throughout the United States in a variety of settings including rural, urban, private, school system-based, and hospital- or institution-related. A wide diversity among projects is encouraged so that models will be developed which are applicable to as many different handicapping conditions and environmental areas as possible. For example, some centers concentrate on programs for educable mentally retarded children, some on trainable mentally retarded, children with learning disabilities, children with speech and hearing problems, children with multiple handicaps. Age groups differ from center to center; and some projects deal with infants while others accept all ages of preschool children, and still others work with a specific age group such as three- to five-year olds.

The projects are expected to provide services to handicapped children and their parents, and to the community. The latter is accomplished by providing information to the public and by finding out about and using the resources in the community to increase services to handicapped children.

In order to assure that each model center could develop an exemplary program for children, several requirements are placed on the program design and project activities:

Emphasis must be placed on developing and using intervention strategies for increasing abilities of children in the areas of language development, intellectual development, physical development, social and emotional development, and mental development.

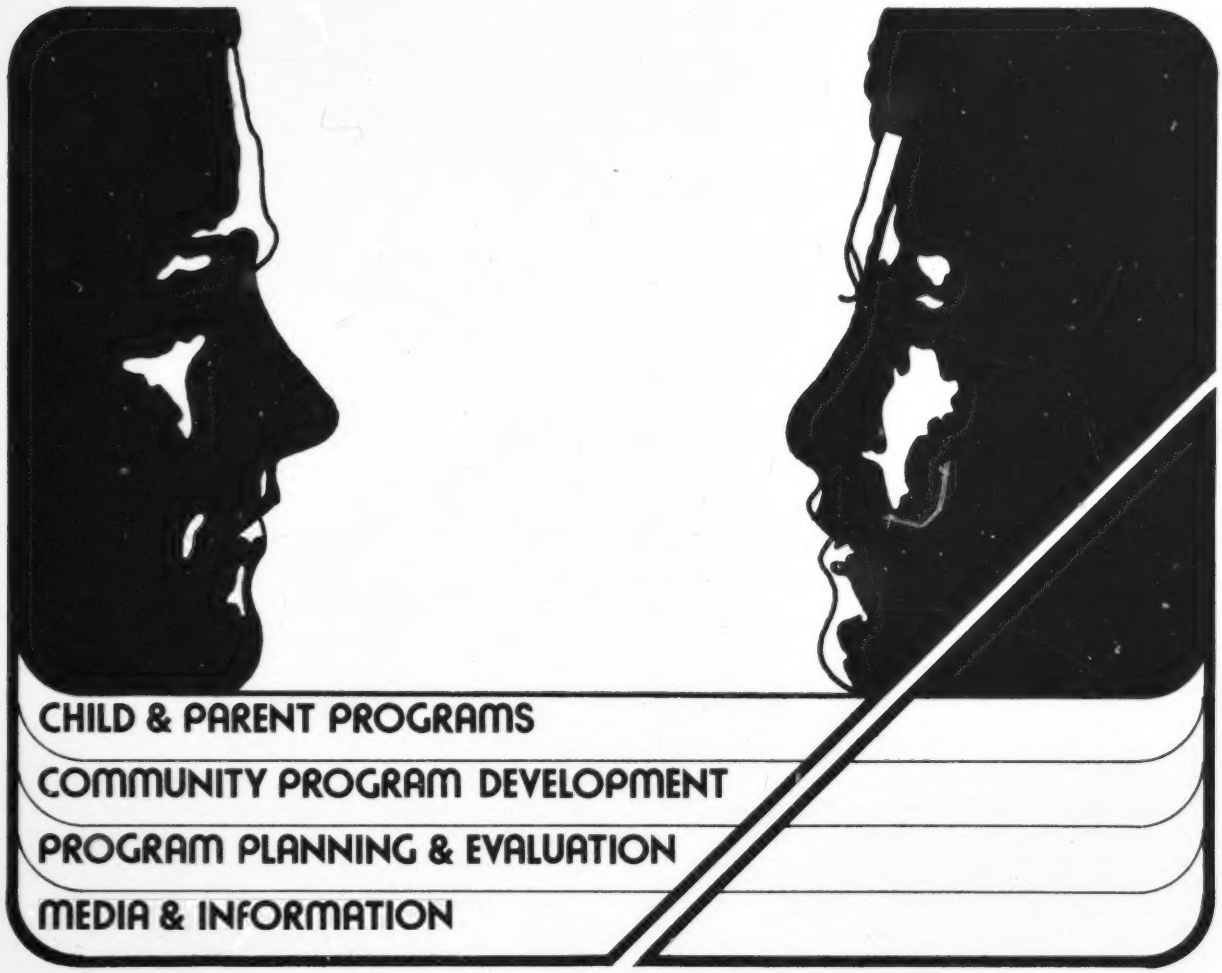
The program must emphasize parental and family involvement. Families of handicapped children need assistance and support in understanding their child's disability and in providing a positive home environment for development. Therefore, activities and services of each project should be designed to encourage active and varied parent participation.

Cooperation among educational agencies, medical service agencies, and other appropriate agencies is encouraged in order to develop comprehensive service programs for young handicapped children.

The project should stress the dissemination of information in order to acquaint the people and agencies within the community with the problems and potentialities of handicapped children. Both the general public and the professional community should be informed about the programs.

The model centers are expected to develop procedures for evaluating project efforts. Internal evaluation should determine the extent to which the project continuously meets the needs of the children who are served and should also delineate needed modifications in each component of the program. An external evaluation, on the other hand, should determine the effectiveness of each project which is funded. Through evaluation procedures the nation-wide impact of all programs should be determined. These evaluations should be cooperative activities between the projects and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES: TADS



A support organization, the Technical Assistance Development System (TADS) was established in 1971 to provide a comprehensive array of assistance to the projects in the First Chance Network. TADS, a component of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, offers assistance by identifying and delivering resources to the projects. These resources take the form of consultation, workshops, information, data, and deliverable products.

TADS has four internal divisions that deal with giving assistance in specific areas with which the projects most frequently need help. These areas are child and parent programs, program planning and evaluation, community program development, and media and information. Each section and its functions are discussed on the following page.

CHILD & PARENT PROGRAMS

In the area of child programs, the centers and, in turn, TADS are concerned with activities to assist the child in such areas as language development, motor development, conceptualization, perception, social adjustment, emotional development, physical health and assessment. Technical assistance may take the form of a workshop on curriculum or the identification and enlistment of a consultant's services in the area of the project's need.

In the area of parent programs, there are several objectives that the projects try to achieve: active parent involvement in the project, information exchange between the project staff and parents and among parents, the provision of emotional support to parents by project staff members, and the facilitation of positive parent-child interactions. The technical assistance provided by TADS in this area is similar to that offered in the area of child programs.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The general philosophy that the development of systematic planning procedures increases the probability of achieving goals is prevalent throughout this network. Program planning involves the project's stating its long-range goals and objectives in behavioral terms in all program areas, and stating the method with which they will evaluate each objective. Assistance in this area may take the form of consultation, development of written plans, or review and recommendations concerning a program or evaluation plan which the projects send to TADS.

COMMUNITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The area TADS calls community program development addresses the "missionary" or outreach charge with which the projects are mandated—that is, to demonstrate their model program and to create interest and support in the community and region. Assistance in this area may take the form of a consultant to help the project draw up a replication plan or to accompany the project on a visit to a proposed replication site.

MEDIA AND INFORMATION

The Media and Information section of TADS addresses the dissemination, demonstration and training needs of the projects and assists them in their unique activity of outreach through media. The assistance delivered may be consultation with a project staff member about how to develop a slide/tape program or a brochure. Instruction about how to use videotaping in the project, the distribution of instruments and other reference materials to the centers are other services offered by this group.

THE TADS WAY

During the first two years of TADS' existence, a technical assistance process was developed and is now used extensively by TADS. This system for delivering assistance has five sequential interlocking phases. They are developing a program plan, assessing the needs, writing the technical assistance agreement, delivering technical assistance, and evaluating the technical assistance. The evaluation is a determinant in how the technical assistance is delivered in the future, and so the cycle begins again.

PROGRAM PLANNING

Planning is the key to the process. The project must be able to specify its plans in each program area to be able to distribute its resources appropriately and place emphasis on the most important parts of its program. In doing this they can project what their needs for technical assistance are going to be and when it should be received.

A standardized form for writing out the program plans is used consistently by TADS. A sample of this form appears on page 9. As you can see when this form is filled out, it gives a very specific outline of what the project intends to do in each area. The components of the program plan outline are interrelated in sequential order from left to right. For example, the goal statements determine what the outcome objectives will be and the outcome objectives determine what the activities will be.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The progression to the needs assessment phase of the process occurs when the program plan outline is complete. The outline is reviewed by the project staff (usually the director) and a TADS representative to determine what problems or needs are likely to occur over the next program year. It is quite possible that these needs became evident when the program plan outline was being written. The needs are then specified by the parties involved and listed in priority order.

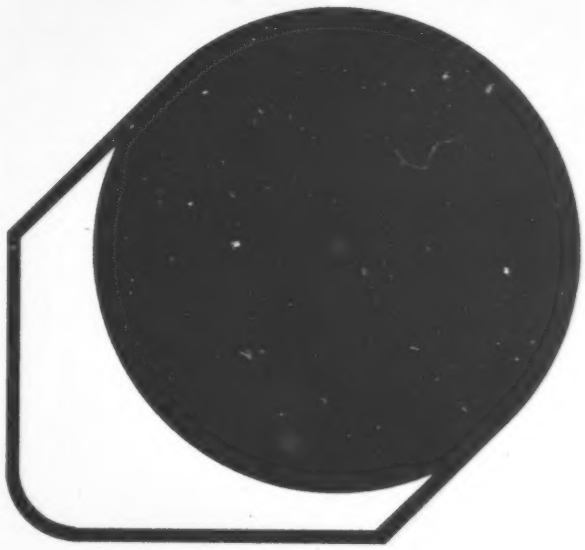
The purposes of these two steps in the cycle are three-fold: 1) to initiate a personal relationship with the project personnel leading to mutual trust and respect, 2) to determine the general needs of the project for purposes of future planning and technical assistance delivery, and 3) to specify a list of programmatic needs in priority order.

The next step is to organize these needs into a technical assistance agreement.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS

A technical assistance agreement is a written plan which specifies the technical assistance needs of the project, the outcome objectives of the technical assistance, the actions to be taken by both TADS and the project, and the evaluation of the technical assistance plans. A sample of an agreement is on page 10.

The written technical assistance agreement serves several purposes. One purpose is to provide a clear and concise document to which both parties agree and can refer to when communicating about any part of the assistance. For TADS' internal management purposes, the agreements make it possible to project schedules and coordinate responsibilities. Also, along this line, the cost of the technical assistance can be figured and budgets can be projected. Finally, the agreements are very specific about the details of the technical assistance so that both parties can be sure about whether or not the steps were carried out and when the assistance is complete. Also, evaluation of TADS' services is facilitated by this documentation of what technical assistance is promised and what is carried out.



PROGRAM PLAN OUTLINE FOR MIDTOWN, U.S.A.

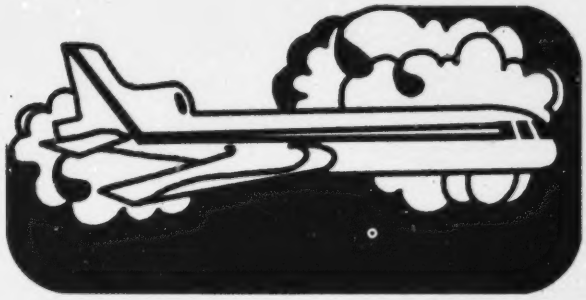
TARGET	GOAL	OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION
Children 3-5 years	1. To provide comprehensive services for 3-5 year old emotionally disturbed chlidren through a model educational and therapeutic program.	1.1 By the end of FY-74, 80% of the project children will improve in language development as measured by standardized instruments.	1.11 Each child will be administered individualized training session based around weekly objectives. 1.12 Individual programs will be monitored on a weekly basis. 1.13 By the end of FY-74, the project will have sequenced communication skills through first grade.	1.1 The ITPA will be administered on a pre-post test basis. 1.2 These children functioning below ITPA will be evaluated on weekly pre Distar and Distar objectives.
		1.2 80% of the project children will achieve a minimum of one objective in the area of social relations per month as identified by project staff.	1.21 Each child will be administered individualized training session based around weekly objectives. 1.22 Individual programs will be monitored on a weekly basis. 1.23 By the end of FY-74, the project will have listed behaviors and teaching strategies for social relation skills up to first grade.	1.2 The number of children achieving this objective will be enumerated for each month of child intervention.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT OUTLINE CENTRAL CITY U.S.A.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIONS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EVALUATION PLAN
3.1 To disseminate information about the project.	3.1 A slide-tape program in use by March 15, 1974.	3.1 The project director will send TADS the following information by Jan. 1, 1974: (a) working title of the presentation (b) main audience(s) to which the program will be addressed (c) purposes and/or outcomes of the slide-tape program (d) list of the specific equipment to be used in presenting the program (e) a rough copy of the proposed script (f) estimate of running time for the program (g) package of slides to be included in program	3.1 The arrival of this material in TADS office by Jan. 1, 1974.
		3.2 TADS will review the above materials and make recommendations to the project director by Feb. 1, 1974. After the script is agreed upon, TADS will tape the narration and send it to the project director. If necessary, TADS will send a staff member for one day of consultation by Feb. 15, 1974.	3.2 The existence of a slide-tape program by March 15, 1974.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

There are three broad categories of assistance that TADS provides, categorized by where and how the services are delivered. The categories are in-field, in-house, and printed technical assistance.



IN-FIELD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This kind of technical assistance encompasses those TADS-sponsored activities which take place at project sites or in conference or workshop settings. On-site consultation is delivered in response to the terms of the agreement by matching the stated need to a consultant with demonstrated expertise in that area. These consultants or "resource people" usually come from one of three groups: the Major Advisory Board which consists of sixteen professionals from all over the United States whose areas of expertise cut across areas pertinent to education of preschool handicapped children, directors and staff members from other First Chance projects, and TADS staff members. When it seems appropriate, services from outside these three groups are arranged in order to provide assistance to the centers.

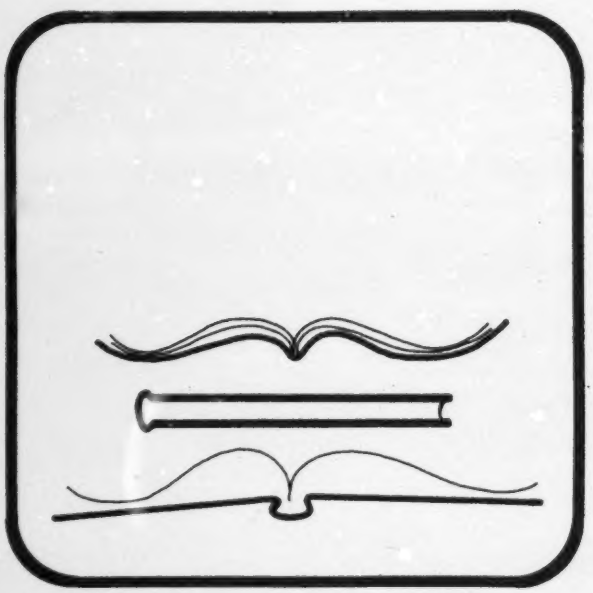
Conferences, workshops and group meetings are also used for in-field delivery of technical assistance. When several projects express similar needs that could be addressed in a group meeting or workshop environment, then, in agreement with the projects, this method of technical assistance is chosen.

IN-HOUSE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In-house technical assistance is those services performed for the First Chance projects by TADS staff members from the TADS office. For instance, TADS staff members, in response to the terms of the technical assistance agreements, review and critique various written documents of the First Chance centers. Such written materials as program plans, evaluation plans and procedures, curriculum guides and dissemination materials have been revised and critiqued and mailed back to the centers. Responses to requests for planning and preparing media presentations and print materials are often made from the TADS office. The presence of a media laboratory at TADS and media technicians makes it possible to assist centers from a distance.

In addition, requests from the projects for printed materials, assessment instruments, and information searches are responded to from TADS.

Another service TADS performs from its office, but one which is not based on requests from or agreements with the centers, is that of advocacy for the centers and the network. This advocacy, oftentimes directed at other large national networks, increases an awareness of some of the resources available from each other. This awareness leads to contacts that facilitate replication and continuation of efforts to provide programs for preschool handicapped children. Examples of this activity are the productive liaisons with the National Association for Retarded Children, the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, the Education Commission of the States, and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

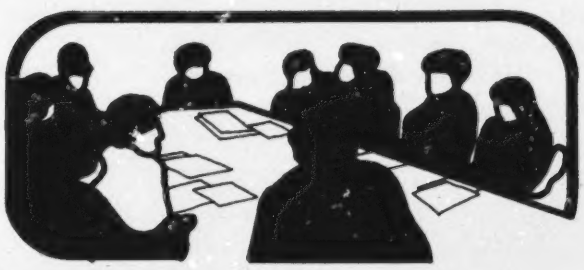


IN-PRINT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Some TADS activities result in printed materials that assist the centers in developing and managing their programs. These publications include a bi-monthly newsletter, information manuals, training manuals, and collections of information about the projects.

These publications are developed to fill needs expressed by projects for printed materials addressing a specific subject; or, in the case of *Cycles,* the bi-monthly newsletter, to fill needs for inter-project communication.

The publications are distributed to the First Chance projects, to the other members of our mailing list and to people who request them.



EVALUATION

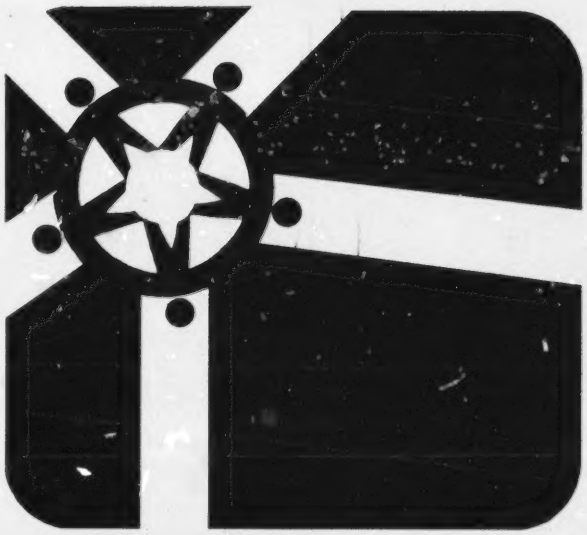
Evaluation of technical assistance is important to the continuous operations of TADS because of the developmental nature of the organization. It is necessary for TADS to know if the technical assistance actions it takes are effective so that revisions can be made in the method of delivering or the content of the services if necessary.

To acquire evaluation of its services, TADS asks the participants in each activity to fill out written evaluation forms and return them to TADS. This evaluation is requested from both the recipient and the donor of the assistance and from workshop participants as well. Such questions as the following are included on the form for project directors who have just received technical assistance in the form of a consultant: What were the technical assistance needs? What was the outcome objective of the technical assistance? What technical assistance actions took place? What were the results of the actions? Were your needs met? What is your general degree of satisfaction with both the consultant and the technical assistance provided? Similar questions are asked of the projects who attend workshops and a request is made for suggestions on how to improve the technical assistance.

In evaluating TADS services as a whole, it must be remembered that TADS services are delivered directly to project personnel and only indirectly to the "clients" of those projects—the children and their parents. Any evaluation of the success of TADS, therefore, should determine the extent to which services are delivered to the project personnel and the extent to which they can implement those services which are delivered by TADS. Only indirect, and quite implicit, statements can be made about the effects of TADS activities on the changes in performance of the children in the projects and their parents.

TADS has no direct authority regarding either the management of the projects or the selection of programs which provide the services for children except in respect to any persuasive influence which TADS might have on decisions which are made by the projects. A study of the effectiveness of the technical assistance delivered by TADS has been performed recently at TADS. An interview with a selected sample of projects was conducted during which the projects were asked such questions as: Did the technical assistance delivered meet your expectations? Was the timing of the technical assistance appropriate for your needs? Was the technical assistance done well and was it the right amount? Did the technical assistance, as delivered, meet your needs? Did the person delivering the technical assistance work well in your project?

The results of this study are being analyzed and implemented and further studies are being conceptualized and carried out. This phase of the process, although the last, is integrally involved with the other three phases and in this respect is the most important.



HOW THE PROJECTS MAKE USE OF TADS SERVICES

TADS initiates contact with projects as soon as it receives a list of newly funded projects. During this initial contact, TADS informs the projects of an orientation meeting in late summer or early fall for the purpose of bringing the projects together to acquaint them with TADS' services, organization, and procedures.

At this meeting, the four sections of TADS—Intervention, Program Planning and Evaluation, Community Program Development, and Media and Information—are explained, as well as the TADS way of delivering technical assistance, much as it is explained on pages 7 and 8.

After the meeting, arrangements are made for a site visit to the project by a TADS representative (staff member or advisor). At this visit, the participants review the project's plans for the following year and make sure that the plans are specific in the goals, objectives, activities and evaluation (see Program Plan, page 9). Working out this program plan usually reveals needs for assistance in carrying out certain phases of the plans. These needs are placed in priority order and the technical assistance needed to meet the needs is specified. This is written into the technical assistance agreement which is sent to TADS. The TADS staff then reviews all the agreements that are returned from the site visits and compares resources and administrative capability with the requests written into the agreement. When these requests and resources have been reconciled, a copy of the agreement that reflects this is sent to the project, along with a notification of what member of the TADS staff will be responsible for seeing that the agreement is carried out. If the project has any questions or requests of TADS from this point on, someone from the project contacts the person who has been specified at this time. This person makes arrangements for the activities written into the agreement to take place, which sometimes involves identifying consultants and making arrangements for the consultant to visit the project; or the project representative at TADS may arrange for members of one project to visit another project. After each technical assistance action is completed, an evaluation form is sent to the project to complete. On this form the project person involved estimates the quality of the technical assistance. When all the actions specified on the agreement have been completed, TADS writes the project to confirm that the agreement has been completed. Unless the project has a question or a special request from TADS, the interaction between the project and TADS is temporarily terminated.

Again in early fall, though, the relationship is renewed with the project and a new technical assistance form is generated between the two parties through a process of program plan review and needs assessment. The T.A. Cycle is repeated during this, the project's second funding year and again during the third, each year building on the past experiences and relationship to improve the quality of the technical assistance and in turn, the quality of the project and the services it provides.

THE FIRST TWO YEARS

TADS FACTS AT A GLANCE

INCIDENCE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY

	On-site Consultation*		Project Visitation*		Group Meetings†		Review and Critique°		Information Requests/ Responses*	
	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73
PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION	41	39	18	6	17	33	3	12	3	3
CHILD PROGRAMS	41	98	34	38	41	4	0	7	16	12
PARENT PROGRAMS	1	8	26	28	30	46	0	0	0	0
COMMUNITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	13	17	0	6	2	37	0	0	1	8
MEDIA AND INFORMATION	32	23	0	0	0	0	1	7	5	48
TOTAL	128	185	78	78	89	120	4	26	25	71

* incidences expressed in number of days

† incidences expressed in number of participants

° includes only formal requests written into Technical Assistance Agreements

In the original proposal for the funding of TADS, some long-range objectives for the project were outlined. Those original objectives and TADS response are listed below.

1 To perform a needs assessment for the First Chance Network.

The first assessment of the needs of the network was completed in the fall of 1971. This assessment was carried out by the members of the TADS Advisory Board after an orientation meeting in Chapel Hill. At this meeting the advisors were given an Interview Kit which they used to collect the information TADS needed. Major areas of need were identified in the process and a series of staff meetings were held in order to develop materials and provide technical assistance services to the projects in the areas of need.

Another network-wide needs assessment was conducted at the beginning of the second year of TADS operations. The needs identified served, again, as the basis for services to the projects by TADS.

2 To establish a computer-based data retrieval system from the proposal face-sheet data.

This system was developed and complete print-outs were filed with the BEH and in the TADS office for those projects which were operating during FY 1972. These data analyses were not performed again in FY 1973 because of an apparent lack of interest in the total analyses. We did, however, assist BEH personnel with the tabulation of the face-sheet data to prepare reports which they needed.

3 To develop a common program planning format.

The common program planning format was developed during our first year of operations and was presented to the projects in a series of module meetings.

Furthermore, a monograph addressing this subject was published and distributed to the network projects. During the second years of TADS' operation, it presented the developed planning format to the newly-funded projects during an orientation workshop. Also during that year, TADS used the format to assist projects in program planning. Technical assistance in planning was provided to those projects which indicated such needs.

4 To provide technical assistance in the area of program evaluation

Technical assistance in the area of program evaluation has been provided to projects within the network. There were many requests from the projects in this area. The assistance given by TADS in response to these requests usually took the form of either on-site consultation or in-house review of evaluation plans or evaluative activities. In addition to the requested assistance, TADS conducted a series of workshops on evaluation during the first year and distributed published materials to project personnel. During the second year, TADS included sessions on evaluation in the orientation conference for first-year project directors. Printed materials published by TADS in the area of evaluation have included the program planning and evaluation monograph and an annoted, cross-indexed bibliography of tests and questionnaires for children and parents. Sample tests and measurement procedures were distributed extensively.

5 To assemble a consultative team

A team of experts in the areas related to programs for young, handicapped children was assembled to serve both as advisors to TADS and as consultants to the First Chance projects. Furthermore, throughout the first two years of its operation, TADS continued the identification of resource persons both within the projects and throughout the states. TADS has relied heavily on both the Major Advisors and other resource persons to deliver technical assistance to the First Chance projects.

6 To design communication channels among the First Chance projects and between the projects and other early childhood programs.

Perhaps one of the most effective means of facilitating the communications among the projects has been the meetings which were sponsored by TADS. The project personnel who participated in the meetings were encouraged to share ideas with each other and to share products which they developed. TADS has also sponsored inter-project site visits. The central purpose of these visits was usually to observe model program components but we feel that inter-project communication was a secondary, but major, purpose of the visits.

Another way TADS furthers communication is to publish a bi-monthly newsletter, entitled *Cycles,* which has been well received by both people within the network and by others on our mailing list.

In addition to these activities, TADS has assisted projects with problems in communication which were identified during the needs assessment process. This technical assistance usually took the form of direct consultative assistance at the project site or review and critique of media, plans, etc. by TADS staff members.

7 **To help First Chance projects identify and export usable components of their programs to other settings.**

Regional meetings were held to provide the project personnel with some insights into the replication task. Furthermore, an informal publication on outreach and replication was distributed, treating in some detail the processes which can be followed for identifying and exporting program components.

TADS added two members to its staff during 1973 who were successful project directors in respect to exportation of their programs. These staff members worked with on-going projects to share their ideas about replication. A decision was made to provide the bulk of the technical assistance for third-year projects in the area of exportation and replication.

During 1973, five meetings were held for state directors of special education or their representatives. In these meetings, TADS personnel met people from most of the state offices for the handicapped. The experience has proved to be quite valuable for TADS in locating people who can help the projects with their outreach missions. One of the sessions during each of those meetings was devoted to a description of the First Chance Network. Furthermore, participants in the meetings were given abstracts of the BEH-funded early childhood projects listed by regions.

TADS has coordinated meetings in three states (California, Iowa, and Texas) at which the project personnel and state agency personnel have met, and subsequent cooperation between the projects and the states seems likely.

Since discussions began about a mandate to include handicapped children in Head Start programs, TADS has kept project personnel informed of developments and possible implications of the developments for the Network. This interest in combining the efforts of the two programs led to TADS assisting six collaborative projects which were jointly funded by Head Start and BEH. Work with these projects led into expanded effort by TADS to work both with BEH and the Office of Child Development (OCD).

Another way in which we have tried to help the projects with their outreach mission is to obtain program time during conferences of national significance so that project directors can speak about their projects. The primary objective of the participation in these programs has been to publicize the projects and their programs: to make those persons in attendance aware of what can be done to help young, handicapped children, what is being done at the present time by these projects, and what resources are available through the First Chance Network. The meetings at which these presentations were made were: Staff Development Conference of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation, five regional conferences of the American Legion Division of Children and Youth, National Conference of the Association of Children with Learning Disabilities, National Conference of the American Association of Mental Deficiency.

8 **To provide technical assistance to projects in the area of programs for parents.**

Our work to accomplish the originally-stated objectives revealed a need by the project personnel for assistance in the areas of child intervention programs and programs for parents. Accordingly, TADS expanded its objectives to include the provision of technical assistance to the projects in those two areas. Services in these areas were provided to the projects by direct consultative assistance, media, and a series of workshops. Since this area is of considerable concern to project personnel, interest in services has been quite high. Workshops were held during FY '73 and a monograph was developed as a result of those workshops.

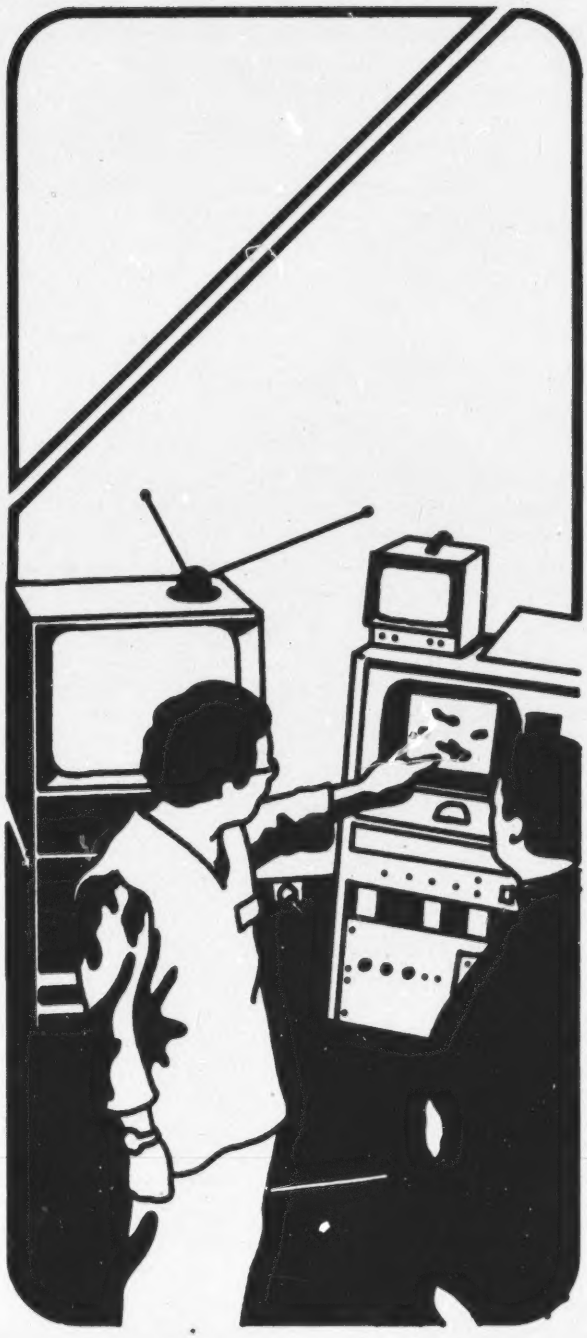
9 To provide technical assistance to projects in the area of programs for children.

The assistance provided by TADS in this area has related primarily to the technology of programs for children rather than to any particular philosophy of instruction. Accordingly, TADS has not advocated any particular instructional philosophy; rather, efforts have been concentrated on the techniques of planning, developing, and implementing programs which take into account the range of children who are served by the projects.

The services which have been provided in this area have been in the form of direct, consultative assistance, workshops, media, and site visits by other First Chance project staff members.

TADS has relied quite heavily on a "pool" of experts in curriculum areas to serve as consultants both to the projects and to TADS in the area of services to children. Although it is extremely difficult to provide consultative assistance in the area of child intervention without imposing personal philosophical preferences on the project, TADS has tried to overcome that problem by selecting consultants whose philosophies coincide with those of the project. Feedback from project personnel has not revealed problems with consultants who try to impose their own philosophy on the projects.

Although it is extremely important in trying to evaluate the effectiveness of our services to emphasize the actions which were taken and the obvious consequences of those actions, TADS thinks that it is also important to consider the degree of satisfaction by "clients" (project personnel) with the services which were provided. With this in mind, we asked each project to file an evaluation report with TADS following each technical assistance action on which the project indicated the degree of satisfaction with the service.



PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SUPPORT SYSTEMS

In providing systematic support to a network of clients utilizing the process described above, TADS has identified a number of organizational and management principles that are useful in delivering technical assistance to a client group such as ours. The principles that we have discovered so far follow.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUTHORITATIVE BASE

If comprehensive services are to be delivered to a group of educational service programs it is imperative that the programs receiving these services believe that they are the most up-to-date and appropriate assistance that is available at the present time within the field. In special education, as in other fields of education, the authoritative base of knowledge is not a definitive one nor is it accepted by all professionals in the field. In contrast to other fields that have established support systems, such as agriculture and engineering, the "truths" are not as well established. In special education there is often disagreement among leaders in the field as to what principles exist, and which instructional techniques to use. If a support system is to be effective it must establish credibility based on an authoritative base of knowledge.

One way to establish an authoritative base of knowledge is by employing highly trained, visible professionals that already have developed an acceptable image. However, even this procedure may not establish beyond a doubt the system's authoritative base.

Another alternative and the one that TADS chose has been to establish an advisory panel to the program that has, in addition to other roles, the role of providing an authoritative base for the system. TADS' advisory panel is composed of experienced professionals who represent a variety of fields which are related to handicapped children. These professionals are respected and well-known within their fields and come from all over the country. The advisors group meets twice a year to review and provide feedback on TADS' procedures and to develop new strategies and ideas for technical assistance. The advisors also play a key role in the actual delivery of technical assistance, providing field assistance in such roles as needs assessors and consultation.

MUTUAL TRUST

In delivering technical assistance services to any client it is imperative that mutual trust be established between the staff of the support system and clients. TADS has had success in establishing this kind of mutual trust by discussing openly with clients. If the support system is to be of service to the client, then the client must respect and trust the services of support systems. On the other hand, if the support system is to have an impact on the target population, in TADS' case young handicapped children, then it must have respect and trust in the copabilities of the clients to deliver meaningful educational services.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is one of the important keys to establishing a relationship of mutual trust and respect between a client and the support system.

As the client works with the support system and begins to expose or discover program needs and weaknesses, he places himself and the program in a potentially vulnerable position. He faces the possibility of having the weaknesses reported to the funding agency or his superiors; or they might somehow be shared with his professional peers or colleagues. At the very least, he exposes the weaknesses to himself and the representative of the support system. All of these possibilities can be threatening, and even a competent client would be reluctant to engage in this kind of self-appraisal without some assurance that he will be helped rather than harmed. For these reasons, it is crucial for the support system to keep the confidences of the clients, and if it does, a reputation for being trustworthy will probably develop amor g the clients.

CONTINUOUS AND SEQUENTIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

It has become apparent over the last three years that there are several principles that deal with the timing and actual delivery of technical assistance that are extremely important. If the client knows that the support system is available for continuous support, each technical assistance incident seems to be more effective. This kind of long-term, planned assistance replaces the more traditional kind of one-day visit from a consultant with no follow-up; and it is therefore more likely to meet the projects' needs as they occur and evolve. Ideally, the organizational development of the project is reflected in the kind, amount, and timing of the technical assistance it receives.

COMPREHENSIVENESS

One characteristic that sets technical assistance systems apart from other consultative services is their ability to respond to many areas of organizational needs of the client.

To employ the principle of comprehensiveness, the support system must not become identified with a particular program bias. If a support system is to be responsive to all legitimate needs of a client program, it cannot afford the luxury of developing its own theoretical viewpoint as to how the client system should be delivering educational services.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Since a support system cannot expect to capture all of the resources necessary to serve the clients within its own organization, it must be aware of a wide variety of "outside" resources for its clients, and able to provide those resources as needed. Such resources include both print and non-print materials, but, by far, the most important resources are human. The primary function of a support system is to identify and deliver appropriate, high quality human resources to its clients.

TADS has gained access to human resources in several ways. First, the advisory group, who collectively offer a broad range of professional expertise and a wide geographical distribution, is a primary source of this kind of service. Second, the clients have identified resources. For example, a project director may say, "I think so-and-so would be helpful if we could get her," and TADS then arranges for the consultation to occur. Third, the clients themselves have become an important resource, and through TADS' coordination, consult with one another. The identification of resources involves a constant monitoring of the needs of the clients and the expertise available to meet those needs. It is important for the support agency to keep the needs of the client uppermost in mind when developing a repertoire of services.

CONSULTANT/CLIENT COMPATIBILITY

The success or failure of services delivered by a consultant is determined in part by how "compatible" that consultant is with the personnel and program being served. Compatibility along a number of dimensions can affect the consultant's ability to work with the center's staff. For example, if the biases of the center's staff and the consultant are not similar in important areas, the consultant's advice may not be valued, or the two sides may never get beyond arguing about their differences.

The background of the consultant may affect the way he is viewed by the client. For example, "university types" might be suspect in some public school settings, while a consultant with identical or similar skills but from another public school system might be readily accepted. Other factors such as age, sex, race, personality, and communication style may affect the compatibility of the consultant with the client. There are, doubtless, still other factors; too many in fact for an analysis of them all to be realistic in choosing each consultant. Moreover, some factors of possible incompatibility (such as race, sex) probably ought to be consciously disregarded or confronted in many instances.

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